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United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General

Report of Inspection

Embassy Kingston, Jamaica

Report Number ISP-I-09-35A, July 2009

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PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the quality standards for inspections, as issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of State (Department) and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).

PURPOSE

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the BBG, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and the BBG. Inspections cover three broad areas, consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980:

- **Policy Implementation:** whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved; whether U.S. interests are being accurately and effectively represented; and whether all elements of an office or mission are being adequately coordinated.
- **Resource Management:** whether resources are being used and managed with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and economy and whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported.
- **Management Controls:** whether the administration of activities and operations meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations; whether internal management controls have been instituted to ensure quality of performance and reduce the likelihood of mismanagement; whether instances of fraud, waste, or abuse exist, and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting this inspection, the inspectors: reviewed pertinent records; as appropriate, circulated, reviewed, and compiled the results of survey instruments; conducted on-site interviews; and reviewed the substance of the report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, organizations, and activities affected by this review.



**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors**

Office of Inspector General

PREFACE

This report was prepared by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, and Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. It is one of a series of audit, inspection, investigative, and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its responsibility to promote effective management, accountability and positive change in the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

This report is the result of an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the office, post, or function under review. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observation, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations therein have been developed on the basis of the best knowledge available to the OIG and, as appropriate, have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. It is my hope that these recommendations will result in more effective, efficient, and/or economical operations.

I express my appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. W. Geisel".

Harold W. Geisel
Acting Inspector General

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KEY JUDGMENTS

Embassy Kingston's chargé d'affaires has cultivated the necessary range of Jamaican contacts to effectively further U.S. programs in a bilateral environment where individual relationships are hard to achieve and yet essential for getting things done.

The Embassy benefits from excellent interagency relationships, above all in the key law enforcement area where nine different agencies/sections almost invariably resolve operational issues on the spot rather than take disputes to Washington.

The narcotics affairs section has intelligently refocused its modest budget to support the reform of critical Jamaican institutions, without which meaningful counter-narcotics progress cannot happen.

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The Embassy's large consular section has experienced difficulties for several years. Too few experienced officers and too little leadership have left entry-level officers struggling to control a complex, high-profile, high-demand operation.

A lack of effective management controls has resulted in unauthorized commitments that have to be ratified as well as possible violations of the Anti-Deficiency Act.

The new embassy compound, while aesthetically pleasing, is hampered by correctable design and construction flaws, and the mission has a continuous need for corrective improvements.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between January 5 and January 23, 2009; in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; on January 22 and 23, 2009; and in Kingston, Jamaica, between March 4 and 24, 2009. (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
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CONTEXT



The land of rum, reggae, Rastafarians, and romantic beach getaways, Jamaica is the third largest Caribbean island after Cuba and Hispaniola. The size of Connecticut, it has a population of 2.8 million people who have strong ties to the 2.5 million Jamaicans living in the United States and Canada, many as recent immigrants.

Jamaica's history has been more tragic than happy. Its Western discoverer, Columbus, was marooned there for a year. Its original Native American population dwindled and intermarried to be replaced by African slaves brought first by the Spanish and then by the British who, under the leadership of Admiral William Penn, seized the island in the mid-1600s. An earthquake cum tsunami obliterated the country's original capital. Then and now, high winds visit Jamaica with fair frequency, damaging seriously its infrastructure as well as sugar, banana, and lesser agro-industries.

Since independence in 1962, Jamaica has suffered a series of ups and downs that have encouraged the outflow of nearly half its citizenry. Droughts and misgovernment translate into periodic decreases in gross domestic product, which, per capita, remains one-tenth that of the United States. Drugs wrack the island, which is both a transit route for cocaine flowing north from South America to the United States and Europe, and a large cultivator of marijuana for export and domestic consumption. In Kingston's gritty central market, vendors openly hawk big buds of marijuana for the price of a one-way city bus ticket.

Trafficking, poverty, and an armed, embittered underclass make for a volatile human cocktail and potential social unrest: Jamaica typically ranks first or second in the world in per capita murders. Government officials are literally calm under fire: when gunfire recently broke out in a convention hall, the Prime Minister asked for calm and continued with the program. The United States rates our mission in Kingston as a critical crime threat embassy.

Jamaica is perhaps the only Caribbean country other than Haiti to have real problems that potentially could spill over onto the United States. Yet, U.S. official attention to the country has remained modest and literally blows with the wind. As hurricanes head north, Washington agencies routinely leap into gear, working closely with Embassy Kingston, which itself pre-positions consular officers in areas frequented by American tourists.

As a large Caribbean country forming part of the U.S. “third border,” Jamaica partners with the United States on counternarcotics, migration, and development issues. Staffing at the U.S. Embassy is dominated by U.S. agencies involved in law enforcement and immigration including ones under the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security. In addition, 89 Peace Corps volunteers work in country as does the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In all, Embassy Kingston has 77 direct-hire U.S. employees and 213 local hire (14 U.S. and 199 national) employees. Its budget is \$21.6 million.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

RELATIONS WITH HOST COUNTRY AND WASHINGTON

The chargé d'affaires has the necessary range of host country contacts to effectively further U.S. programs. These activities center on security concerns in the broadest sense as well as on soft-power goals related to Jamaica's endemic poverty, HIV/AIDS, and social problems, among others. As deputy chief of mission (DCM) to a political appointee Ambassador who departed in early 2009, the chargé had routinely accompanied this envoy on calls on government leaders. This has permitted him to seamlessly assume the contact work with ministers traditionally handled by a chief of mission—despite functioning in a highly protocol-conscious context where the U.S. chargé sits behind the envoy from miniscule Saint Kitts and Nevis at official functions. The chargé also engages effectively with the highest nonpolitical levels of the government—the permanent secretaries—but encourages section and agency chiefs to meet with these officials as well as with ranking cabinet ministers. The OIG team applauds such liberal sharing of contacts to advance U.S. policy goals. Because there are only one or two officials within a Jamaican ministry who can get things done, the operational needs of the Embassy require agency and section chiefs to go directly to the handful of true decision-makers.

The chargé is managing well a tricky bilateral relationship best viewed with bifocals. At the macro level of traditional foreign relations, the picture is decidedly mixed; at the micro level of operational security and law enforcement coordination, cooperation is excellent given the constraints of resources and capabilities. This dichotomy reflects in part the fragility of the government of Prime Minister Golding and the presence of a bureaucracy loyal to a previous administration in power for 18 years. Bilateral relations also suffered a series of missed opportunities during the early months of the Golding government, amplified by serious differences over U.S. policies towards Iraq, Haiti, and Cuba. In 2008, the Prime Minister went so far as to deflect an invitation to meet with the U.S. president.

The chargé and his Embassy Kingston team have outstanding working-level relations with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA). Cooperation is smooth, two-way in nature, and informal to the point that the chief of mission deals directly with the desk officer on many issues. Mutual respect is evident. Higher-level

Department attention to Jamaica has been stinting. A review of the files finds that since Jamaican independence in 1962, only one U.S. President has paid an official visit. One Vice President came for a few hours. The most recent high-level visitor was a chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, himself of Jamaican background—in 1992. While a WHA deputy assistant secretary visited Kingston in 2008, a WHA Assistant Secretary has not come to Jamaica in mission memory, a circumstance in keeping with the fact that, of all Caribbean countries, Haiti and Cuba command a disproportionate amount of attention.

INTERNAL EMBASSY MANAGEMENT

Embassy Kingston has excellent interagency relationships for the most part, especially among the many agencies engaged in law enforcement. These include the Drug Enforcement Administration, various elements from the Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Marshals Service, and relevant Department section chiefs. All participate in a collegial but sharply focused weekly law enforcement working group session, which the chargé d' affaires chairs with evident effectiveness. Relations among the sections are such that potentially overlapping responsibilities or differing views on operational issues are invariably settled at post rather than taken to parent agencies in Washington.

Now that he has moved up from DCM to interim chief of mission, the chargé has the authority, and the mandate, to strengthen sectional relationships in the mission. To do so, he should walk the halls more often, and otherwise take a more visible and public role to engage with and enthuse the troops. As is the case in every mission, Embassy Kingston exhibits a varied range of personalities and styles among its officers. In some instances they mesh effortlessly and work well together. Among others, mutual understanding is hard to come by. In those cases, relationships can be strained, and the Embassy works less smoothly than it might. Only the chargé can effectively address troubles of this nature when and where they occur. Harder engagement is called for.

Overburdened in managing the front office solo, the chargé responded quickly to the OIG team's suggestion that he name an acting DCM. In so doing, he chose a section chief who has previously been a charge d'affaires or DCM at three other embassies. This section chief's exemplary people skills could be put to mission-wide use in improving local employee morale, forging a better sense of team, (b) (2) (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) (b) (2) . As this section chief must necessarily leave aside some of his duties

as counselor to a political-economic section already without one of its two subordinate officers, the chargé is looking for imaginative ways to draw upon the talents of his entry-level officer corps that labors for the most part on the visa lines.

The designation of an acting DCM also will help address the OIG team's concern that some elements of the Embassy are casual about deadlines and festering problems. Embassy Kingston displayed nonchalance during the initial stages of the OIG inspection. Functional questionnaires, mandatory input, were provided a month late, even though individual sections had prepared submissions a month before the deadline. The management section failed to distribute personal questionnaires to American and local employees until the day prior to the OIG's arrival, thus inviting hasty, incomplete or no responses.

The mission has the support of a range of agencies, elements, and resources to accomplish its goals. They span the diplomatic spectrum from hard power to soft power, from arrest warrants for fugitives to cultural programs in the atrium. Maintaining an appropriate balance among these forces calls for deft leadership, and neither the previous Ambassador nor the chargé has yet achieved equipoise. A somewhat macho law enforcement ethos pervades the mission, sometimes to the detriment not just of diplomacy but of diplomatic behavior.

The front office is at its best in directing internal paper flow related to the economic, political, commercial, and law enforcement objectives. The charge d'affaires knows the issues and delivers an excellent written product to Washington, including a recent message drafted for a sizeable Congressional delegation that was a model scene-setter.

Meetings serve to inform and be informed, and are generally appropriate in terms of length and focus. The previous Ambassador was disinclined to rein in participants who overly dominated the proceedings. The charge d'affaires has done better on this score but could be more forceful in achieving balanced participation. Some country team members overwhelm others of equal rank with equally germane information to share.

MISSION STRATEGIC PLANNING

The chargé and embassy team did an outstanding job in preparing the Mission Strategic Plan, with the political-economic section chief serving as overall mission coordinator. The chief of mission statement stands out for its readability, cogent

rendering of the economic backdrop and bottom line sense of which U.S. objectives can reasonably be achieved. It features achievable deadlines and understandable metrics.

In reviewing this document's requests for additional staff, the OIG team concurs that the U.S. equities would be well served by an additional local hire in the political-economic section to handle commercial affairs and other duties. The section is overburdened, with just one officer on the job when the OIG team arrived. The Foreign Commercial Service is no longer represented in Kingston, and the United States has a strongly favorable trade balance with Jamaica. Further, a local employee with English and education comparable to that of an American officer can be had for roughly one tenth the cost, when logistical support is factored in.

The OIG team partially concurs with the Mission Strategic Plan's request for an additional consular officer. A rotational officer, dividing time between the consular and the political-economic sections, would best fill the bill. Conversely, the Mission Strategic Plan's request for an additional assistant regional security officer position appears questionable and could benefit from careful Washington review. While the new embassy complex is larger, its very design was intended to reduce the cost of security to the taxpayer. Tighter internal administration by the regional security officer and a more balanced approach to security would also disburden the office.

ENTRY-LEVEL OFFICERS AND STAFF

The chargé has done a good job in working with the Embassy's large entry-level component of 12 officers and staff, most of whom labor in the consular section. Two of the officer positions rotate every year between the consular and the political/economic sections. While the Embassy lacks a formal entry-level program, the front office has addressed most of the required components of the mentoring and guidance for such personnel. In September 2008, the chargé reinstated monthly meetings, after a considerable hiatus. He has also invited all entry-level officers to his residence for informal get-togethers and held brown bag lunches to discuss career-related issues. Some officers have assisted on U.S. military ship visits or had an opportunity to craft voluntary cables under the guidance of the political and economic section deputy.

Exempted from writing evaluation reviews for entry-level officers serving in the consular section—the consul general as a senior Foreign Service officer can do such reviews—the chargé writes the reviews for specialists, including office management

specialists. This is a good practice. The OIG team also commends the chargé for holding an instructional session for section chiefs on how to write evaluation reports for entry-level officers and others.

Until recently, workload pressures within an ultra-busy and understaffed consular section led consular managers to discourage entry-level officers from taking advantage of work experiences outside of the section. The perception from below is that the front office might have injected itself more forcefully into the consular management equation—whether to press for efficiencies, more assistance from Washington, or simply have employee review reports done to schedule. An OIG review of the files indicates at least ten reports on entry-level officers and staff were submitted late, many seriously so. Eight of these reports were on consular officers. Such a situation leaves entry-level officers, like several other mission elements, wanting more hands-on direction from the top.

MORALE

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The OIG team believes that the chargé might usefully take the following steps as soon as possible: 1) convene an all-hands meeting to address employee concerns; 2) ask for local employee representatives from each section and agency to meet with the front office; 3) institute formal mechanisms such as quarterly or bimonthly all-hands meetings as well as occasional off-sites to solicit input and suggestions for improvement; and 4) induce American supervisors to attend to morale by addressing this subject in annual evaluations of supervisors prepared by the Ambassador and DCM. In addition, the Embassy might usefully broaden its orientation program for new arrivals to include lectures on cultural differences, which are considerable but masked by the fact that English is a common language.

SECURITY

The chargé has the requisite sense of urgency and priority about all aspects of security at Embassy Kingston, a mission which operates in a critical crime threat environment. Besides a formal weekly meeting with his security chief, the chargé maintains an all-hours open door for an activist regional security officer who brings to the task energy and experience gained from assignments at dangerous postings. The front office has taken the lead in encouraging the coordination of security information with family members by having the regional security officer work with the community liaison office. The chargé also emphasized compliance with monthly radio checks to ensure that the entire mission, including families, is fully conversant with this essential tool in the event of natural disasters.

While the chargé and regional security officer work collaboratively together for the most part, the security officer is resistant to front office prodding to work more collaboratively with non-law-enforcement elements of the mission. The OIG team urged the chargé to continue pressing this talented but headstrong officer who could benefit from a fuller understanding of how the full panoply of diplomatic resources should be employed. The OIG team leader also counseled the regional security officer on this subject.

POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SECTION

The political and economic section effectively carries out its operational and coordinating responsibility for two of the mission's four major strategic goals: to increase peace and security by reducing crime and corruption as well as by promoting good governance, economic prosperity, and sustainable development. The section works closely with other agencies at the Embassy, particularly USAID, to advance these goals. The FO-O1 section chief acted as the lead coordinator for the Mission Strategic Plan and is otherwise the factotum for much of the Embassy's non-law-enforcement programmatic work. In recognition of his skills, he was elevated to acting DCM during the inspection. Three American officers staff the section, including a mid-level FO-03 economic officer and a FO-04 rotational entry-level political officer who normally serves for 1 year. The section also has one local employee who assists in all traditional political and economic functions of the section, and one office management specialist.

The political and economic section also serves as the mission's catch-all for duties traditionally performed by other agencies. The Foreign Commercial Service closed up shop in September 2007, leaving the political and economic section's deputy and a local employee to do residual commercial work. The section chief also nominally supervises a Foreign Agricultural Service local employee who reports to the agricultural attaché in Embassy Santo Domingo. This local employee is heavily integrated into the work of the section, including participation in section meetings. The section chief also steps in for the narcotics affairs and public affairs officers whenever they are absent from their one-officer sections. At the onset of the inspection, the OIG team found the political section chief to be extremely busy. (b) (6) (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) The agricultural local employee position is vacant. In short, the section is doing quite a lot with very little.

U.S. Foreign Assistance to Jamaica

With its anemic economic growth over decades (now negative), poverty, debt levels equal to 124 percent of GDP, high unemployment (11 percent) and inflation

(17 percent), endemic crime and corruption, high HIV/AIDS rates, and recurring severe damage from hurricanes and flooding, Jamaica relies heavily on private remittances as well as the modest assistance provided by the United States and other donors. Jamaica's weak institutions, shortage of legitimate economic opportunities, and geographic proximity to the United States are exploited by organized criminal gangs for drug trafficking, money laundering, gun running, and other illegal activities across and into the United States. Jamaica remains a "majors" list nation for the transit of illegal drugs into the United States and attracts fugitives from U.S. justice.

With a per capita income around \$4,000, Jamaica benefits from bilateral assistance and some regional educational funds from the USAID. USAID staffing, however, has been greatly reduced in recent years, including a 60-employee reduction in force in early 2008. At present, it has only 20 American and Jamaican employees, although staffing will likely increase slightly because of funding already in the pipeline. The Peace Corps, with a budget of \$2.1 million and 79 volunteers and 24 staff members, has shrunk from previous levels of about 110 volunteers. Other U.S. agencies working in health assistance without permanent staff members in Embassy Kingston include the Department of Defense as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Resources and Services Administration within the Department of Health and Human Services. Embassy Bridgetown will host an overall coordinator for a new 12-nation, 5-year regional partnership framework under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief to fight HIV/AIDS, and Embassy Kingston will likely host additional staff for this regional partnership. Embassy Bridgetown will serve as the regional hub. In recent months, the Embassy did well to institute an interagency working group on development assistance, with the DCM and USAID director acting as co-chairs.

Assistance Planning Documents

The OIG team views with misgivings the proliferation of planning documents in the assistance arena. Some overlap. In aggregate, they demand an inordinate amount of staff time and reduce the time that can be spent in the field doing actual assistance work. In most cases, coordination with Washington is limited. These multiple planning documents include the performance plan and review prepared by the USAID office, which looks back 1 year and ahead 1 year, and attempts to incorporate most U.S. Government assistance plans. The second is the Mission Strategic Plan, which looks back 1 year and ahead 3, and is a Department-driven document for planning internal embassy resources, programs and assistance. Under the planning process for the Department's Director of Foreign Assistance, USAID Kingston also prepares an operational plan to capture Department and USAID foreign assistance, minus any of the old or new HIV/AIDS money under the President's Emergency

Plan for AIDS Relief. Under the President's new regional partnership framework for HIV/AIDS relief, Embassy Kingston will work with Embassy Bridgetown to prepare a new country (or regional) operational plan to reflect all U.S. funding to fight HIV/AIDS in the 12-nation region, not including the Dominican Republic, Guyana, or Haiti. In 2008, Embassy Kingston volunteered to be a pilot embassy for the country assistance strategy initiative, a 5-year planning exercise for all U.S. assistance, including agencies outside the Department and USAID.

The Embassy manages the cumbersome task of preparing these multiple and overlapping documents as a team, and with an eye for consistency. Regarding funding numbers, the Embassy is able to reference its requests against a matrix of standardized goals that help to simplify matters. The performance plan and review, the Mission Strategic Plan, the operational plan, and the country assistance strategy are all single documents for Embassy Kingston, and it will help prepare the regional compact's country (regional) operational plan. OIG made some general suggestions and observations in the section below on the burden of required reporting and planning.

Assistance Data

Overall U.S. assistance to Jamaica for FY 2008 was \$12.2 million, with \$11.8 million projected for FY 2009, including \$6.8 million in development assistance. Child and survivor health assistance for HIV/AIDS relief equaled \$1.2 million for both FY 2008 and FY 2009. In addition, Jamaica will receive a one-time grant of \$5 million in FY 2009 for disaster relief for Hurricane Gustav. Under a new Caribbean regional compact of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief to start by May 2009, Jamaica and 11 other Caribbean nations will receive \$15 million in additional annual funding, with \$5 million for Jamaica. Given that Jamaica has almost half of the 6 million people in the regional compact nations and has an HIV/AIDS prevalence rate above the average for the region, the OIG team finds the country's share of regional compact resources disproportionately small.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Department's Office of the Global Aids Coordinator, should determine the relative amounts of the new regional partnership framework HIV/AIDS funds to be allotted to Jamaica and others in the 12-nation compact based in large part on population and prevalence data. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with S/GAC)

The Embassy's other assistance programs include narcotics and law enforcement funds from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. Spending for this program in FY 2008 equaled \$992,000; projected spending for FY 2009 is \$1 million. Counternarcotics money under Section 1004 equaled \$111,000 in FY 2008 and \$200,000 in FY 2009. Antiterrorism assistance funds from the Bureau of Diplomatic Security totaled \$500,000 in FY 2008 and FY 2009. In addition, Jamaica benefits from international military education funds (\$756,000 in FY 2008 and a projected \$750,000 in FY 2009) as well as hospital/civic action ship visits and exercises administered through the Embassy's military liaison office. Foreign military fund financing was zeroed out in FY 2008 due to overall program shortages in Washington but grew to \$1.3 million in FY 2009. Jamaica was made eligible in FY 2009 for Department of Defense Section 1206 global training and equipment assistance in FY 2009, but no funds were allocated. The Embassy will reapply for Section 1206 funds in FY 2010.

Political Reporting and Analysis, Counterterrorism

Shortfalls in staffing in the political and economic section over the past year stretched its resources, including for reporting. Staffing gaps limit the depth and breadth of contacts. The Embassy may want to consider assigning junior officers in other sections to work part time in the political and economic section to help fill the current gap caused by the extended absence of the number three officer, as well as any future gaps.

Whatever the limitations on staffing, Washington end users singled out Embassy Kingston's political and economic reporting for special praise. One agency characterized the economic reporting as easily the best in the region. Good reporting efforts included the cable Kingston 133 of February 9, 2009, which skillfully set the scene for a visiting congressional delegation, as well as a memo dated November 19, 2008, to the White House transition team outlining U.S.-Jamaican relations. The section, bulwarked by reports prepared by the DCM, also crafted with evident care congressionally mandated reports, spot reports done in cable form, and contributions to WHA's daily activities report. A steady stream of e-mails was also directed to interested agencies in Washington. Some Washington end users would like for additional reporting, especially biographic, but this appears as much a distribution problem as anything else. The OIG informally recommended that the Embassy coordinate with the Department's country director for Caribbean affairs to achieve a wider, more systematic distribution of daily activity reports and e-mails to Washington end users.

Political-Military Activities

The political and economic section coordinates political-military issues with the Embassy's Defense attaché office and military liaison office, the permanent Department of Defense positions at the Embassy. In particular, the military liaison office consults with the political and economic section regarding export control issues. Relations among the three political-military elements of the Embassy are harmonious. There is no political-military working group, but issues of mutual concern are addressed adequately on the margins of the country team and law enforcement working group meetings. Starting in summer 2009, the Department of Defense will designate the incoming military liaison office chief as the senior Defense officer at the Embassy. The military liaison office and the Defense attaché's office share the load of exchanging diplomatic notes with the host governments in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands to cover visiting U.S. military personnel.

The military liaison office takes the lead in handling foreign military financing credits, international military education training, and limited military procurement opportunities. This office works closely with local military liaison offices of the United Kingdom and Canadian High Commissions to avoid duplication of efforts. The commander of the U.S. military liaison office reports directly to the U.S. Southern Command in Miami, Florida. The Defense attaché at the Embassy conducts reporting and representational activities for the Department of Defense in Washington. The number of Department of Defense visitors in country at any given time peaks when ships visit for civic and humanitarian work.

Trade Promotion, Environment, Science, and Technology

The Embassy does not have an economic and commercial cluster or working group. The OIG team finds this acceptable given the low-level, intermittent nature of trade and commercial issues in the Embassy. Efforts by the political and economic section to communicate among the few relevant sections or agencies appear adequate. The mission takes a structured approach to strengthening the framework for open markets. In this area, the mission does well in meeting its limited economic and commercial objectives, despite limited resources.

Apart from funds available to the local employee of the Foreign Agricultural Service, the Embassy draws upon the very modest business facilitation incentive account to allow political and economic staff to travel for commercial training. The section

responds mainly to local requests for trade facilitation and advocacy from U.S. firms. It lacks the information technology or other means to connect with the Department of Commerce's standardized business promotion programs.

In 2007, U.S. exports to Jamaica were about \$2.7 billion, representing almost 40 percent of all Jamaican imports. Jamaica's total exports to the United States in 2007 were about \$800 million. The current amount of U.S. direct foreign investment stock is not readily available but old figures indicate that the United States leads all investors in Jamaica. Jamaican exporters currently have preferential access to the U.S. market under the Caribbean Basin Initiative, which is up for renewal in September of 2010. While there is interest in expanding trade talks with the United States under the umbrella of the regional Caribbean community, CARICOM, group of nations, talks have not progressed significantly to date.

When the Department of Commerce terminated its presence in Jamaica, the Embassy requested a new local employee position in the political and economic section under the Mission Strategic Plan process. The OIG team concurs that such a position would provide greater depth and range to the section's work. In 2008, Embassy Kingston helped facilitate a grant of \$820,000 from the Trade Development Agency in Washington to study the proposed privatization of the national air carrier, Air Jamaica. The Trade Development Agency also provided lesser amounts of grant money to promote two waste-to-energy projects in Jamaica that may attract U.S. bidders. The section works closely with the local American chamber of commerce to benefit from its resources.

The section responds to day-to-day requirements in the environmental, science, technology, and health areas such as presenting demarches on global issues and requesting host government support in multinational bodies.

The Burden of Required Reporting and Planning

Since the abolition of the worldwide special embassy reporting program, small to medium missions devote disproportionate time to all-embassy assignments, which pose much less of a burden for major U.S. embassies. Above all, embassies like Embassy Kingston devote much of their reporting resources to required annual reports and plans, including many mandated by Congress, on subjects ranging from human rights to religious freedom, trafficking-in-persons, foreign assistance planning and investment disputes, among others. Each is based on a separately defined statute with different reporting schedules and standards, some in conflict. Many of the mandated reports carry the possibility of sanctions. Thus, dialogue with host governments can be prickly and beyond the skill or experience of the relatively junior officers at small

to medium embassies who typically craft these reports. Above all, the OIG team favors a simplification of the different deadlines, guidelines, and timelines for these many reports, especially for those not mandated by Congress.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND NARCOTICS AFFAIRS SECTION

Law Enforcement

The Department ranks Jamaica as a critical-crime post. Violence is endemic, and the murder rate worrisomely high. The country is not only the region's largest exporter of marijuana to the United States but a transit route for cocaine as well. A perennially troubled economy, a social fabric continually threatening to unravel, entrenched corruption, and a strong subculture of lawlessness lead some observers to predict a slow but steady slide to Haiti-like dysfunction. Others see that doomsday scenario as excessively pessimistic. Regardless of the long-term predictions, present-day Jamaica is incontestably a troubled nation.

Given its nearness to the United States and the dense web of ties between Jamaicans and Americans, insecurity on the island poses a real threat to the United States. Because of profile and proximity, Embassy Kingston hosts a muscular complement of law-enforcement personnel and agencies, including the United States Marshals Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. A Federal Bureau of Investigation liaison officer is accredited to Kingston but resides in Santo Domingo. The Defense attaché and the military liaison officer join the group because the Jamaican Defense Forces play a significant role backing up the police: Jamaica has 10,000 police officers, while the Jamaican Defense Forces number 3,000. An expanded law enforcement meeting brings the chiefs of the political and consular sections, along with the director of USAID, to the table.

The chargé exercises active oversight of law enforcement activities. He is well versed in the details of the programs while ensuring that all activities mesh with policy and the mission's priorities. At the time of the inspection, the chargé had regularized meetings of those involved in law enforcement work, to the satisfaction of participants. On policy matters the chargé tasks the narcotics assistance section chief with lead responsibility. Individual section or agency chiefs assume the responsibility for operational matters in their specific areas: Drug Enforcement Administration on counternarcotics, U.S. Marshals on fugitives, etc.

In Embassy Kingston, agency and section heads work together with a notably high degree of coordination and cooperation. Information sharing is the norm, turf considerations are generally minor, and people are in touch with one another informally on almost a daily basis. This collegiality and spirit of shared purpose set a standard that is one of the mission's success stories. Embassy officers also coordinate their work with British and Canadian counterparts resident in Jamaica, in an effort to avoid duplication and maximize return on donor nations' investments.

While the agencies of the Jamaican Government charged with security and anti-crime responsibilities suffer from corruption, insufficient training, and the vagaries of a sluggish bureaucratic system, the Embassy views some recent personnel changes in key positions as positive and has found ways to work successfully on law enforcement matters. Systemic shortcomings notwithstanding, embassy officers pointed to an eagerness to work on the part of many Jamaican counterparts that suggests continued engagement by Embassy Kingston is a viable approach meriting Department support.

Narcotics Affairs Section

The officer who runs the narcotics affairs section and coordinates counternarcotics activities in Embassy Kingston blends attention to program details with policy savvy. The officer, the first to complete a tour in the section in a decade, supervises a capable senior-level local employee. A position for a second local employee is vacant. As with law enforcement matters in general, cooperation and collegiality characterize the interactions of those involved in counternarcotics activities.

Besides growing marijuana on the island and shipping it to the United States, drug traffickers have made Jamaica a transit stop on the cocaine route. In 2004, the Jamaican Government took down three drug kingpins with connections to Colombian traffickers. That operational success cut the flow of cocaine substantially. However, seizures are once again on the rise, and intelligence estimates point to a worrisome uptick in the amount of cocaine passing through the region. Some of those working to check the flow believe that pressure being exerted by the massive \$400-500 million Merida Initiative to the west is forcing traffickers to take another look at the Caribbean.

The current director of the section, with front-office concurrence, has somewhat redirected embassy counternarcotics support. Money from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs is still provided for essential equipment and training. At the same time, the Embassy believes that meaningful progress toward combating drug trafficking cannot happen in Jamaica unless and until the

government confronts and remedies a number of systemic breakdowns. Among these the most important are the investigation and prosecution systems. Improving the blighted institutional structures whose *raison d'être* is the investigation and prosecution of criminals will take years. U.S. support must be carefully targeted, thoughtfully applied, and sustained. Yet the road to real progress goes through reform. The OIG team concurs with this analysis and commends Embassy Kingston for its approach.

Previous inspections of Embassy Kingston noted a problem with timely end-use monitoring of equipment provided to Jamaican organizations. At the time of the OIG team visit, that problem appeared to have been solved. The local employee makes good use of a network of contacts and spends a reasonable amount of time checking on the location and condition of equipment, providing accurate data to the American supervisor for mandatory yearly reporting.

For several years, the existence of unused money in the pipeline was problematic. Projects for which support had been designated did not come to fruition. At the time of the inspection, approximately \$800,000 remained in the pipeline but was slated to be disbursed in support of a financial crimes unit and a witness identification program as well as to purchase night-vision goggles for drug interdiction operations.

Cooperation with Jamaican counternarcotics officials and units has likewise improved. In recent years, the Embassy sent a message to the Government of Jamaica by withdrawing some equipment that had been provided to certain entities and eliminating support for certain programs. The message has registered where it was intended to register. The Embassy views the appointment of new people in critical senior positions as boding well for future cooperation. While the OIG team is not in a position to test the validity of that hypothesis, it is a reasonable approach that deserves Department support.

The OIG team believes that Embassy Kingston is well-positioned in counternarcotics, with a field-tested strategy, an efficiently run program, and strong working relationships throughout the Government of Jamaica where it needs them. The Embassy would make profitable use of additional money from the bureau.

Bureau funding, however, has in fact nosedived in recent years. In FY 2004, the budget for Jamaica was \$4.2 million. The projected figure for FY 2009 is approximately \$1 million, slightly up from a low of \$759,000 in FY 2007. Of that \$1 million, more than half goes to fund "program development and support." This covers the salaries of narcotics assistance section employees, including the American supervisors, along with International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

(ICASS) charges, which are 40 percent above the amount the bureau paid before the move from the old embassy in 2006. The net result leaves a pittance—approximately \$600,000 in FY 2009—to fund counternarcotics efforts in Jamaica.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

In a country as close to the United States as Jamaica is, with so many human ties, the American image matters. Thoughtful Jamaican interlocutors acknowledge a love-hate relationship on the part of their compatriots when it comes to the United States. While Jamaicans admire American culture and achievements, disparities in size, power, and influence between the neighboring countries make the United States an easy target for charges of bullying, indifference, or unfair treatment, depending on the issue of the moment.

In that broad social context, negative perceptions of the consular section have become a staple in the media and in the public mind. A line of visa applicants unsheltered from fierce sun or heavy rain can become feedstock for public indignation. Perhaps second in importance are the convicted felons deported from the United States. Jamaicans believe these deportees learn to ply their criminal trade in American streets and prisons after which, skilled and hardened, they are dumped on the island of their birth, further straining a social fabric already under stress. Trade issues also rank high on the public-opinion agenda. Jamaicans see the lack of a free trade agreement with the United States through a lens of fairness and find frequent fault.

This combination of proximity and disparity presents a formidable public diplomacy challenge. To meet it, Embassy Kingston has a modest public affairs section led by an American officer who supervises eight local employees. Public affairs activities show an admirable reach and volume, particularly taking into account the relatively small size of the section. The section is active and gainfully employed but not fully integrated into the mission.

Media coverage of mission activities is good. Local employees sustain useful contacts with journalists in the Kingston media. Washington readers praise the section's daily media summary.

Noontime concerts in the Embassy's attractive atrium have been an unqualified success, bringing into the Embassy important Jamaican contacts who might not otherwise appear, at the same time warming up and humanizing a place that can

easily be caricatured as another “Fortress America.” Creative use of this ample space for cultural programming and other public diplomacy events makes sensible use of a valuable resource that is at hand.

Responsibilities are clearly delineated throughout the section, and the public affairs officer evaluates with skill and care the performance of local employees. The staff are attentive to exchange programs, which are small in size but large in influence. They appear to take diligent care of Fulbright participants, both the Americans going to Jamaica and the Jamaicans coming to the United States.

Employees in the section generally work collaboratively, and back each other’s work. Record keeping is also generally good: the well maintained grants files merit commendation.

Public Diplomacy Strategy

All of this goes some of the distance to meeting Embassy Kingston’s public diplomacy challenge. At the same time, the public affairs officer is somewhat marginalized from the front office and the interagency process that the country team represents. This inadequate integration has led to serious shortcomings not fully resolved by the public affairs officer’s participation in a weekly meeting of Department section heads. The mission lacks an overarching public diplomacy strategy for dealing with the media. The public affairs officer is the designated spokesperson, and consular, political, and economic officers, among others, are regularly tapped to speak with journalists on subjects related to their professional discipline. In overall terms, however, the Embassy deals with the media on an ad hoc basis, and front office involvement is limited.

Recommendation 2: Embassy Kingston should develop and execute a public diplomacy strategy. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

International Visitors Committee

The lack of full public affairs integration in Embassy Kingston has led to another problem. The mission has no committee to coordinate the International Visitors program, which is often ranked by Ambassadors as among their most valuable resources. In lieu of a mission committee, the public affairs section solicits candidates from contacts in the Jamaican organizations with which they deal. The section then

nominates grantees from among the candidates proposed by their contacts, and the International Visitors program staff in Washington make the final decisions about who participates.

This procedure is unacceptable. It cedes too much control of a vital mission resource to persons who, however well intentioned, do not represent the interests of the United States. It also fails to take advantage of mission employees' typically broad contacts in Jamaican society. Similarly, the process currently in place in Embassy Kingston does not profit from embassy officers' understanding of the mission's goals and how individual nominations and specific programs can support them. A functioning committee could serve the additional purpose of avoiding overlap and duplication among other exchange and training programs.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Kingston should establish a committee to coordinate the nomination of Jamaican candidates for the International Visitors program. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Information Resource Center

The public affairs officer supervises the operation of an information resource center. This attractive and relatively spacious facility is located on the ground floor of the new embassy outside the interior hardline. The center has approximately 1,000 reference books, a dozen periodicals, and a number of commercial databases, as well as access to the State Department's Ralph Bunche Electronic Library. It represents both a significant investment of U.S. Government money and a tremendous potential resource for cultivating influence among Jamaica's elite, those who shape public opinion, and the younger generation who will inherit the challenge of strengthening their nation.

At present the center is less than fully utilized. There are several reasons why. When the OIG team arrived in Jamaica, the most recent annual plan on hand for the center was a draft from 2005, before the Embassy moved to the new compound. During the OIG team's stay, the information resource officer in Washington, a Department expert, provided the public affairs section with an updated plan.

The same officer visited the Embassy in December 2008 leaving a detailed report with a number of useful suggestions for increasing the center's impact. The OIG team endorses these suggestions. Like its counterparts in many embassies, the center in Embassy Kingston relies on electronic outreach to selected Jamaican contacts.

This is a sensible approach, but the volume of information the staff provides in that manner is low. As part of a campaign to intensify electronic outreach, the information resource officer suggested sending the tables of contents of magazines, currently distributed to mission staff, to appropriate Jamaican contacts as well. The OIG team believes this is a good idea but is not in itself sufficient.

To make better use of the media resources at their disposal, and to fully implement the revised annual plan, center staff would benefit from the professional development training offered by the Bureau of International Information Programs.

Recommendation 4: Embassy Kingston should send the appropriate information resource center employees for training in professional development. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with IIP)

The center's location inside the compound, where security concerns complicate access, makes it difficult for the section to take full advantage of its resources. The center would be more appealing to frequent visitors if the security arrangements were modified slightly. Conducting background checks and providing some form of escort-required badge would allow selected mission contacts to avoid the mandatory 24-hour lead time for an appointment that discourages use of the center. The public affairs section would identify those visitors whose access they wish to facilitate. These frequent visitors would still undergo security screening before entry into the compound and would not be allowed beyond the chancery interior hardline.

Recommendation 5: Embassy Kingston should conduct security checks on specific visitors to the information resource center and issue escort-required badges to visitors selected by the public affairs section. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Student Advising

Given the enormous influence that studying in the United States exerts on young Jamaicans, student advising is a vital embassy function. The public affairs section does a creditable job of identifying potential students and providing them the information they need to choose a school. The information resource officer's report suggested that the section conduct a monthly overview session at the center and market

these sessions to schools and universities. The OIG team concurs with this suggestion and believes hosting the sessions at the center will give the venue much needed profile.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Kingston should conduct monthly student advising sessions at the information resource center, marketing them to selected schools and universities. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Embassy Web site

An information resource center employee maintains the Embassy's Web site. At the time of the inspection, the Embassy was transitioning to the "content management system" mandated by the Department. The transition has not been fully accomplished. The home page lacks dynamism and interest. During February, there were no hits on the site. The local employee, who has other major duties, has not been adequately trained in using the software. While training may not completely solve the problem of a listless home page, without it the public affairs section will not make progress.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Bureau of International Information Programs, should provide appropriate technical training to the local employee who manages the embassy Web site. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with IIP)

Public Affairs Coordination with USAID

Although the USAID presence in Jamaica has been reduced, its programs continue to play an important role in the bilateral relationship. At the time of the inspection, USAID and the public affairs section were not working closely together to deal with the media. USAID staff write and place their own press releases, which they send to the media on USAID rather than embassy letterhead. The public affairs section has made laudable use of the mission activity tracker software to capture and profile its own work and the work of some other mission elements with which section staff work closely, but not USAID. The OIG team believes that increased coord-

dination of the media posture between public affairs and USAID staff could further integrate USAID into the Embassy and ensure that Embassy Kingston speaks to the Jamaican public with one voice. The OIG team left an informal recommendation on that subject.

CONSULAR SECTION

Kingston's consular section has suffered several years from shortfalls in experienced officers, correctable design or construction flaws in the new embassy, a non-immigrant visa backlog, and less than assertive leadership. This has left entry-level officers struggling to control a complex, high-profile, high-demand operation. The recent arrival of a highly competent mid-level officer has improved the situation, but more needs to be done.

Overview

An FE-MC officer heads a large consular section that includes 36 local staff, 12 entry-level officer positions, and three mid-level officers who steward visa activities, American citizen services, and fraud prevention. A fourth mid-level officer position is currently unfilled. The FO-01 visa chief position is designated as deputy consul general. Two consular agents are based in Montego Bay, Jamaica, and in the Cayman Islands.

Embassy Kingston's consular workload is substantial for a country with just 2.8 million people. In 2008, the mission ranked 20th among U.S. consular operations in nonimmigrant visa adjudications, 11th in immigrant visas, 45th in U.S. passport applications, and 12th in Congressional inquiries. The authorized U.S. and local staff is sufficient to handle this workload.

The consular section has occupied a spacious area on the ground floor of the new embassy building since 2006. The layout and furnishings provided by the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations are less than ideal for a consular operation: the work flow is inefficient and cannot be improved upon, absent a major restructuring of the space and replacement of furniture. There are too few enclosed offices for the unit chiefs, who need occasional privacy to discuss sensitive cases or counsel employees. There is insufficient storage for records. The lack of separation between personal work areas invites friction among office mates. The public entrance and

waiting room are miniscule relative to the number of people who apply for services each day. All these would be irritants in a section otherwise well managed and highly motivated, but in Kingston they have become important issues.

In 2008, the Bureau of Consular Affairs sent a consular management assessment team to review Kingston. A visit that same year by the Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs won permission for Kingston to employ a call center to help it handle the demand for nonimmigrant visas.

Controlled Access to the Consular Section

Admission to the consular section is inefficient. About 1,000 visitors per day enter through a compound access control whose design limitations make for image and security problems. The compound access control point has a single security screening station. As guards screen visitors, a crowd builds up on the public street outside the Embassy, where they are at the mercy of heat or rain, depending on the season. The misery of the waiting line is grist for local media: both major newspapers have carried critical editorials. Jamaican Government officials dwell on this theme during meetings with embassy personnel and have even withheld development permits from the Embassy in retaliation. The city of Kingston and local residents also complain about the trash left behind by the crowd. The overall impression is that the United States cares little about the welfare of individual Jamaicans.

The security dimension of the problem is equally worrisome. The crowd of clients waiting to get into the consular section is augmented by relatives and friends, as well as by vendors, idlers, scammers, and even drug dealers. Several employees of the visa appointment call center are positioned on the sidewalk, helping to organize those waiting to enter. Their efforts, however, concentrate on nonimmigrant visa applicants. They have no responsibility for the rest of the crowd. Security concerns prevent assigning a consular employee to work on the street.

The screening process moves slowly, through a single metal detector and X-ray machine. Although consular customers are told, both verbally and by posted signs, that cell phones are not allowed into the compound, many phones are discovered during screening inside the compound access control area. The offending customer must then go back out to dispose of his or her phone before rejoining the queue to be screened once again. This double screening slows the process for everyone. The lack of a restroom for the local guard force and local police means that they must go to the consular section to use the bathroom, slowing the process still more.

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In 2007, Embassy Kingston directed the project manager of the new embassy compound to propose a design solution, which the Embassy submitted to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. At the time of the inspection, the 2-year moratorium on major changes to a newly constructed capital project had passed. Given the problems the compound access control presents, the OIG team believes that the design flaws should now be rectified.

Recommendation 8: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Kingston, should design and fund a solution to the problem of crowding at Embassy Kingston’s compound access control number two. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Kingston)

Relations with Other Agencies

Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Citizenship and Immigration Services, and the U.S. Marshals Service all maintain offices in the Embassy, and have frequent interaction with the consular section on issues ranging from adoptions to deportations. All give high marks to the consular local staff and current management for knowledge, cooperation, and efficiency.

Consular Agents

The consular agents in the Cayman Islands and Montego Bay, Jamaica, incorrectly report to the American citizen services chief. Bureau of Human Resources regulations, as specified in 3 FAM 8911 e., state in part, “Consular agents work under the direct supervision of the principal consular officer at the supervisory post.”

Recommendation 9: Embassy Kingston should realign the responsibilities in the consular section so that the consul general supervises the agencies in Montego Bay and the Cayman Islands, and rewrite the work requirements statements of the consul general and the American citizen services chief to reflect that change. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

American Citizen Services

The four highly experienced local employees of this busy unit smoothly handle a wide variety of complex cases, prioritize well, and deal patiently with even the most difficult customers. The supervisory mid-level officer and rotational entry-level officer weigh in as needed to handle especially demanding customers and to keep the work moving expeditiously.

Visa Unit Organization

Embassy Kingston responded to the challenge presented by the new embassy's smaller public waiting room by merging the nonimmigrant and immigrant visa units. Since that merger, local employees who were highly skilled in their respective—and very different—areas of expertise struggle to find job satisfaction in an undifferentiated employee pool in which they rotate between work responsibilities every two days. This rotation of responsibilities causes complex cases to pass from hand to hand and reach resolution very slowly, if at all, because no single officer or local employee can be sure to remember the case details and guide them confidently. Likewise, no officer or local employee can feel proud of a difficult case well-handled and correctly concluded, due to the number of employees who worked on the case or perhaps just passed it along.

A group of American officers, mostly entry-level, designed the merger and sold it to consular management and to the local staff as the only logical solution to the public access problem. They did not solicit input from the local staff, even those with ample expertise. Doubts and misgivings of local staff were disregarded, even though no other sizeable U.S. consular section operates a visa unit combined in this fashion.

Recommendation 10: Embassy Kingston should separate the combined consular visa unit into one nonimmigrant and one immigrant visa unit, each with its own staff of local employees and with a suitable number of officer positions. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Nonimmigrant Visa Referrals

Embassy Kingston has not always followed the nonimmigrant visa referral standards established by the Bureau of Consular Affairs. The OIG team's review found

that the previous chief of mission and others have submitted inappropriate referrals. Among those allegedly of U.S. national interest were two cosmetics sales clerks, a cook, a bank teller, an airline clerk and a grocery shop manager.

Referrals in Kingston have not always been adjudicated correctly. In 9 FAM Appendix K the Bureau of Consular Affairs specifies that class A referrals must be adjudicated by the section chief, and that class B referrals should be adjudicated by the section chief but can also be adjudicated by another supervisory consular officer. In Kingston, class A and B referrals are regularly adjudicated by other officers of lower ranks. Allowing entry-level officers to adjudicate visa referrals leaves them vulnerable to pressure from those above. Conversely, it does not permit the section chief, who has sole responsibility for referrals, to properly monitor the use of the system.

Recommendation 11: Embassy Kingston should comply immediately with all requirements specified in 9 FAM Appendix K for nonimmigrant visa referrals. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Consular Work Responsibilities

The visa chief, at the behest of the consul general, devotes too much time to management issues, rather than to the duties specified in his work requirement statement. For example, the visa chief approves time and attendance for the entire section, although 4 FAH-3 H-525.2-3 specifies that supervisors must review and approve the time and attendance reports of subordinate employees. He worked for months to move the parser, a specialized computer component to enable real-time updating of worldwide consular data, to the consular section, and to ensure a major supplier of automated equipment was paid. He also created and implemented a dedicated employee call-in line, a task inappropriate for a mid-level manager with significant visa responsibilities. In the meantime, visa responsibilities were not fully addressed, leaving interviewing officers to e-mail the Bureau of Consular Affairs, sometimes daily, for information and advice that the visa chief should be providing on the spot.

The administrative assistant does not have enough work to do because some of her core duties are being performed either by the visa chief or by the FSN-3 consular clerk in the visa unit. This is a management disconnect in that the visa chief is overburdened with work that the administrative assistant should be doing and the visa unit is under-supervised. In addition, the fraud prevention manager supervises the nonimmigrant visa unit rather than attending full time to fraud. The OIG team

counseled the visa chief to spend the majority of his work day outside of his office in the visa unit working with the local staff and American officers, managing by walking around.

Recommendation 12: Embassy Kingston should return all administrative work responsibilities that have been handled by the visa chief and the FSN-3 consular clerk to the consular administrative assistant, consistent with her work requirements. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 13: Embassy Kingston should reorganize approvals for time and attendance reports so that the consul general approves these reports for American personnel and the unit chiefs approve them for local staff. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

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Consular Entry-Level Officers' Employee Evaluation Reports

Seven consular entry-level officers' employee evaluation reports were submitted late in 2008. Late or incomplete evaluation reports deny employees the opportunity for full feedback and hamper the work of those making critical decisions on tenure, promotion, meritorious service increases, and other actions. Reflecting the importance of timely evaluations, 3 FAH-1 H-2819.1-3 provides detailed guidance on the consequences for those responsible for submitting delinquent reports.

Recommendation 17: Embassy Kingston should implement a procedure that ensures prompt submission of all consular section employee evaluation reports. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 18: Embassy Kingston should annotate the files of those responsible for consular section 2008 evaluation report delinquencies. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

The Consular Fraud Prevention Unit

The consular fraud prevention unit's staffing contravenes norms established by the Bureau of Consular Affairs' Office of Fraud Prevention Programs. There is no local supervisor, although the senior-most local employee has acted in that capacity for many years. Without a local supervisor, day-to-day operations can suffer from lack of direction and prioritization. With a local supervisor, work can be coordinated and directed more effectively, especially during the times that the fraud prevention officer is absent.

The fraud unit's local employees are proficiently performing work that is understood by the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Overseas Employment to be of higher grade levels than the employees' actual grades. The regional human resources officer agreed with the OIG team that all of the unit's local positions should be reassessed and regraded. Embassy Kingston has already started this reevaluation process.

While Embassy Kingston's fraud unit conducts investigations into citizenship, nonimmigrant and immigrant visa cases, it is not routinely involved in the revocation of petitions for petition-based nonimmigrant and immigrant visa cases that prove fraudulent. This goes counter to standard practice wherein fraud prevention units handle such revocations. When nonfraud professionals prepare such petition revocation requests, these can suffer from a lack of coherence or consistency that leads to reaffirmations. In a consular section with a fraud prevention unit, all suspected fraud should be referred to that unit for investigation and conclusion.

Several validation studies had been performed in the year previous to this inspection, but not all were completed. None was reported as the Bureau of Consular Affairs requires.

Recommendation 19: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Florida Regional Center, should reorganize its consular fraud prevention unit to appoint the senior-most local staff member as the local supervisor. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with FRC)

Recommendation 20: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Florida Regional Center, should complete reevaluation of all the local fraud prevention positions using the computer-assisted job evaluation process. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with FRC)

Recommendation 21: Embassy Kingston should implement procedures to submit all immigrant and nonimmigrant visa petitions that appear to be revocable to the consular fraud prevention unit for investigation, analysis, and revocation request drafting, submission, and tracking. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 22: Embassy Kingston should implement procedures to submit all citizenship and passport applications that appear fraudulent to the consular fraud prevention unit for investigation, analysis, and recommendation for action by an American citizen services unit officer. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 23: Embassy Kingston should assign responsibility for performing and reporting validation studies to the fraud prevention unit and transfer all completed and in-process validation studies to the fraud prevention unit. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Overall Consular Management

With the visa backlog now cleared away, the consul general could be more assertive as a manager, addressing, for example, the need for greater congruency between staff duties and staff capabilities. The OIG team found that the consul general delegates to the visa chief—and presses him to produce results on—administrative matters such as the public address system, the consular public entrance, furniture problems, and the need for privacy partitions between desks. In the meantime, the visa unit could benefit from more day-to-day supervision by its chief officer. The consul general could, in fact, address these administrative matters directly himself—as his rank and ample bureaucratic experience could be put to good use. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to that end.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY 2008 \$000
State – D&CP	32	3	31	66	\$2,465
State – ICASS	5	5	102	112	7,421
State – Public Diplomacy	1	-	8	9	459
State – Diplomatic Security	1	-	11	12	2,370
State – Marine Security	6	-	4	10	147
State – Representation	-	-	-	-	24
PD - Representation	-	-	-	-	6
State – OBO	-	-	-	-	1,494
State - MRV	-	4	4	8	365
Defense Attaché Office	4	-	1	5	136
Agriculture - FAS	-	-	1	1	*
Agriculture - APHIS	1	-	5	6	584
USAID	4	-	15	19	**
Department of Justice	9	2	2	13	645
Peace Corps	3	-	5	8	2,197
MILGRP-DSCA	2	-	-	2	99
Department of Homeland Security	4	-	6	10	2,108
State INL (PD&S)	1	-	2	3	350
State INL (Projects)	-	-	-	-	642
DEF (O&M, TAT,	4	-	2	6	100
Totals	77	14	199	290	\$21,612

* Funded by Embassy Santo Domingo

** Funding data not available

REAL PROPERTY

The development of Embassy Kingston's real property, which in many ways represents a huge success, continues to present challenges for the mission. Design flaws in the new chancery, an outdated warehouse, frequent water damage from hurricanes and tropical storms, and seemingly ceaseless residential renovations are straining the budget and denting mission morale.

New Embassy Compound

The new embassy compound, occupied in December 2006, is well-suited for the Kingston mission. The chancery houses all primary sections in its four floors and has ample room for future growth in staffing. The exterior and interior design creates a professional and welcoming environment in which the front office can host a variety of events. Unfortunately, there are a number of design flaws due to incomplete construction by the contractor. These flaws demanded costly and/or time consuming corrections or work-arounds as the mission settled into the new facility.

The new embassy compound had been powered by its backup generators for 5 consecutive months at the time of the inspection. The rooms housing the switch-gear equipment did not contain air conditioning units to properly cool and filter the air, and Jamaica's warm, damp climate steadily built up condensation in the electrical equipment. Although the incoming facilities manager noted the flaw in September of 2008, the vacuum breakers in the switchgear were already damaged. Two months later, they failed—before air conditioning units could be installed. Without these breakers, the Embassy could not connect to the city power grid. The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations was scheduled to replace the vacuum breakers in April 2009.

Another serious oversight in the design of the new embassy compound was the absence of emergency lighting. Due to the urgent need for this improvement, Embassy Kingston installed these lights using \$2,500 from routine maintenance and repair 7901 funds. These expenses should have been included in the original funding for the new embassy compound, not the maintenance budget. As a result, Embassy Kingston's FY 2009 maintenance budget is reduced by 3.5 percent.

Recommendation 24: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should increase Embassy Kingston's routine maintenance budget to cover the cost of installing emergency lighting in the new embassy compound. (Action: OBO)

The new office annex houses USAID and the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement unit on the first floor. The Immigration and Customs Enforcement unit occupies unsecured office space, which limits the unit's full mission performance. The second floor of the annex is undeveloped for office use. In 2008, the attaché of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement unit proposed the development of secure office space on the second floor and contacted the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations to begin the process. The project has since stalled due to miscommunication between the Embassy and the bureau architect's developing plans. Consequently, the attaché had to return the FY 2008 allocated funding of \$350,000 and resubmit a request in FY 2009.

Recommendation 25: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should complete plans and an agreement with the Department of Homeland Security to build secure office space in the new office annex. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with OBO)

The new embassy compound needs more parking spaces than the 79 that are currently available and reserved exclusively for visitors and American employees. As a makeshift arrangement, the Embassy has rented an off-site parking lot for \$26,000 a year from which it shuttles local employees to the Embassy compound. Including waiting times for the shuttle, this procedure adds 40 to 60 minutes to the local employees' commute each day.

By contrast, the embassy compound parking lot is one-third underused and has ample area in and around it suitable for low-cost expansion. By clearing equipment currently dumped in this lot, moving a few small trees, and extending the pavement, at least 30 more spaces can be added and still leave the one mature tree intact. Expenditures to increase parking on the embassy compound so as to accommodate all employees would be cost effective, given the expense of renting an outside car park, hiring security for the car park, and operating a shuttle.

Recommendation 26: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Kingston, should expand the parking area in the new embassy compound. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 27: Embassy Kingston should implement a parking policy that is equitable for all employees and makes the best use of available resources. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

The embassy warehouse was an existing structure on the land used for the new embassy compound, and a renovation was not included in the construction project. It has the appearance of a temporary building that has outlived its design. The foundation is insufficient to prevent flooding in the rainy season. The air conditioning system, when functioning, spews dust from disintegrated insulation. During summer months, the heat in the warehouse rises to a level that makes the interior walls hot to the touch, an unsuitable environment for storing furniture and appliances. The interior office walls and ceilings are moldy and crumbling. The warehouse also lacks enough storage space for the mission's property, prompting the warehouse crew to use the Colin L. Powell residential plaza as an ancillary storage facility. But the original warehouse is still overcrowded, and the plaza storage space needs improvement before it can be fully utilized. The current condition of the warehouse presents the risk of widespread damage to Embassy Kingston property.

Recommendation 28: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Kingston, should renovate or replace the warehouse. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Kingston)

Government-Owned Housing

The greatest challenge for both government-owned housing and leased housing is the prevention and repair of water damage. Jamaica's rainy season lasts a good half year and features nearly annual hurricanes; in 2008 alone, four major tropical storms caused severe damage in the country. The OIG team found signs of water damage in nearly all residences and general inattention to simple measures to lessen storm damage, such as the instillation of door thresholds, hurricane strength storm shutters, roof gutters, and seals in window frames. Windows and outer doors in Powell Plaza are caulked for major storms, but otherwise have poor sealant throughout the majority of the rainy season. Constant repairs for water damage are costly whether for maintenance or, in serious cases, for the need to relocate occupants to temporary quarters.

Recommendation 29: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should conduct a survey of government-owned housing to identify and install necessary improvements to prevent water damage. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 30: Embassy Kingston should conduct a survey of short-term leased housing to identify measures to prevent water damage and negotiate with landlords to install necessary improvements. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

The chief of mission and consul general's residences are government-owned and serviceable for representation, although the chief of mission's residence is not ideally located. The chief of mission residence grounds are nicely landscaped and can accommodate various events. The facilities maintenance manager has been diligent in identifying improvements and repairs needed throughout the residence, estimated to cost about \$500,000. The location is also not optimal in that it can take a good hour to get to the Embassy during storms. At peak hours, high-speed traffic just outside the gates to the residence poses a problem for entering or departing vehicles. Overall, however, the residence is adequate for the Kingston context, especially if modest modernizations take place.

The consul general's residence also needs various improvements. The yard is minimally landscaped and does not have an adequate sprinkler system to water the yard during the dry season. The staff quarters are musty and damp, and there is an old vent access leading into a staff closet that is open to rain and insects. The problems with the staff quarters are addressed in a recommendation in the facilities maintenance portion of this report.

The Colin L. Powell residential plaza represents an ongoing property development that already serves as a great asset to the mission. The complex has 34 occupied apartments of varying sizes and layouts that accommodate roughly half of the Embassy's American population. Public areas include a gymnasium, pool, game room, sports fields, and other rooms that are still being developed for public use. While there were many construction problems discovered when personnel were first moved into the complex, the facilities maintenance unit has resolved most of the issues, and the apartments are now in high demand.

There are still improvements to be made in the apartments. As noted earlier, measures can be taken to reduce water damage. The apartments are also not equipped with window screens. Particularly during winter months, temperatures in Jamaica are cool enough to allow residents to open their windows and limit the use of air conditioning. Unfortunately, the island's mosquito population carries dengue fever and malaria, thus preventing Powell Plaza residents from safely opening their windows. The installation of window screens would reduce the reliance on air conditioning and save electricity expenses.

Recommendation 31: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should install window screens and storm shelters in the Colin L. Powell residential plaza apartments. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with OBO)

At the conclusion of OBO's renovation work on the residential plaza, the 9th and 10th floors were left entirely unfinished. The mission has independently renovated the 10th floor to create office space for facilities maintenance. The 9th floor still awaits renovation into four more apartments. An OBO architect has prepared a design and a budget estimate. However, no funds are allocated to the project. In the meantime, Embassy Kingston continues to pay rent on four short-term leases for occupants that could be in the residential plaza.

Recommendation 32: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Kingston, should complete the renovations of the Colin L. Powell residential plaza. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Kingston)

Interagency Housing

Aside from water damage, Jamaica's frequent storms present further challenges for embassy housing. Embassy Kingston leases 26 homes for its housing pool, including the chargé's residence. A number of these homes are on the far side of an eight-foot deep storm gully. When storms flood this gully, commuting times lengthen from a half hour or so to more than an hour. The general services office and the interagency housing board are searching for homes on the near side of the gully.

However, this section of Kingston is more expensive for leasing, with typical rental properties exceeding the current price limits for Embassy Kingston. The OIG team addresses this dilemma in an informal recommendation.

One of the houses inspected by the OIG team lacked a fence around the swimming pool in the back yard. Embassies with pools under Department control, whether by residential lease or by ownership, are required to implement the appropriate design or operational safety requirements found in the safety, occupational health, and environmental management resource guide. Failure to implement these requirements creates a high risk of injury and liability for the Embassy.

Recommendation 33: Embassy Kingston should inspect all residence pools and correct any deficiencies in barriers and other safety requirements. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Preassignment of Housing

Delay in preparations for incoming American employees has resulted in leases that are back-dated and signed before funding is approved and premature occupancy of homes that still require basic make-ready repairs and maintenance. Records also indicate episodic but severe tension between the board and the general services office concerning the condition of housing after the make ready is conducted. These serious problems result from the failure to implement the procedures provided in the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Handbook (6 FAH-5 H-340) in a timely and efficient manner.

Recommendation 34: Embassy Kingston should implement procedures to complete the assignment and preparation of housing in a timely manner. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

MANAGEMENT

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The management counselor is assisted by an American management officer. Human resources and financial management officers are stationed at the Florida Regional Support Center. Management operations overall, with the exclusion of general services where major improvements are needed, are satisfactory.

GENERAL SERVICES

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Recommendation 35: Embassy Kingston should revise position descriptions to return supervisory responsibilities to the appropriate general service office employees. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

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There are a significant number of responsibilities duplicated in the American assistant general services officer position and in the local general services office administrative assistant position. The American assistant general services officer has primary responsibility for the embassy motor vehicle, warehousing, and administrative supplies operations, with supervision of 31 local employees. Yet, the local ad-

ministrative assistant's position description also includes supervision of expendable and nonexpendable supplies, monitoring the warehouse, and ensuring effective and efficient management of the motor pool. Embassy Kingston is a medium-size post, and while there is a significant workload, this duplication of responsibilities is unnecessary. This redundancy of supervision and responsibility promotes inefficiency in the office, and undercuts the American assistant general services officer's supervisory authority.

Recommendation 37: Embassy Kingston should revise position descriptions in the general services office to eliminate redundancies in job commitments and responsibilities. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

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Recommendation 38: Embassy Kingston should review and implement the position elements in all general services office position descriptions. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Procurement

The OIG team found serious weaknesses in management controls for procurement and leasing, resulting in unauthorized commitments and possible violations of the Antideficiency Act. This is addressed fully in the Management Controls section of this report.

The procurement unit is generally well-organized and is steadily improving daily operations. Embassy Kingston directly manages only smaller procurement orders; contracts over \$250,000 are prepared by the Florida regional center in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. The general services office implemented use of the integrated logistics management system Ariba software in January for electronic approval and tracking of purchase orders. Office procedures have yet to be revised to make the best use of the Ariba system. For example, the ability of both requestors and approvers to track

the status of a purchase order online eliminates the need for daily meetings with the supervisory general services officer. Some of these procedural weaknesses are addressed in the informal recommendations.

Motor Pool Operations

Embassy Kingston's motor pool is oversized and costly to maintain. Due to consolidation with USAID and the generosity of various agencies, the motor pool contains more than 50 vehicles. Most of these vehicles are more than five years old and require significant maintenance. At one point, a full 25 percent of the vehicles were out of service for repairs. The general services office completed a vehicle use analysis during the OIG inspection and was prepared to begin reducing the number of vehicles, as well as standardize the makes and models of vehicles in the motor pool fleet. The OIG team fully supports these plans.

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Recommendation 39: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should reduce the number of armored vehicles in the motor pool inventory. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with DS)

The requirement for passengers to wear seat belts is not consistently enforced. The OIG team observed the supervisory general services officer, among others, failing to use a seat belt while in embassy vehicles. By not enforcing the Department's seat belt policy requirements, the Embassy risks avoidable injury to passengers in the case of an accident and could suffer legal liability.

Recommendation 40: Embassy Kingston should immediately send a notice to all employees emphasizing that the Department requires the use of seat belts by all occupants, passengers, and drivers, in government-owned vehicles. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Documentation and files for motor pool records are incomplete. The OIG team addressed these concerns in informal recommendations.

FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

The facilities maintenance unit has performed remarkably well in the face of difficult design and construction errors and heavy damage by tropical storms. The unit already has corrected a number of minor and major flaws in the new embassy compound and the Colin L. Powell residential plaza, and completely renovated the 10th floor of the residential plaza to create on-site facility maintenance offices. (b) (2)

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Recommendation 42: Embassy Kingston should implement policies and procedures for the completion of maintenance and warehouse assignments. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

HUMAN RESOURCES

Three local employees staff the human resources unit whose human resources officer works out of the Florida regional center. While this officer visits Embassy Kingston periodically, nominal, day-to-day supervision comes from the mid-level management officer. Overall, services provided are satisfactory. The actual physical working conditions—the three local staff occupy open cubicles—inhibit more sensitive contacts by local employees.

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Recommendation 43: Embassy Kingston should conduct cross-cultural sensitivity training sessions for the staff. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 44: Embassy Kingston should schedule periodic, at least quarterly, meetings between front office management and the local national employees association. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights

Embassy Kingston has a weak Equal Employment Opportunity program. The current counselor is scheduled to depart soon after the OIG inspection; a new counselor has not yet been appointed. Only one presentation was held in the past 2 years. It was poorly attended.

While there have been no formal cases opened recently, the general interpersonal environment in the Embassy demonstrates the need for a strong program. (b) (2)
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(b) (2) It is doubtful that most local employees would feel comfortable bringing a complaint to an American Equal Employment Opportunity counselor, regardless

of the counselor’s skill and trustworthiness. A liaison, selected from among the local employees, could facilitate communication among local employees, the front office, and the Equal Employment Opportunity counselor.

Recommendation 45: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Office of Civil Rights, should immediately appoint a local employee as Equal Employment Opportunity liaison. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with S/OCR)

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Embassy Kingston’s financial operations are effective. A local employee financial management specialist supervises the staff day-to-day and is authorized to certify vouchers up to \$50,000. The management officer provides day-to-day oversight. A financial management officer in the Florida regional center visits the Embassy several times a year and otherwise provides support. Class B cashier operations are limited to official transactions. Cashier services such as check cashing for all staff are provided on-site by a commercial bank that operates a minimal 2 hours a day, 2 days a week. This limited availability adversely affects the Class B cashier, who must accumulate receipts until they can be deposited, as well as mission staff. Deposits must be made within the Embassy because of crime conditions in Kingston. (b) (2)
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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

The ICASS council, after extended discussion dating back to at least September 2008, agreed to a temporary duty billing policy to go into effect May 1, 2009. Some costs of operations can be offset by charging agencies for support provided for employees on long-term temporary duty assignments at the Embassy, an issue highlighted in State 081046 dated July 28, 2008. Paragraph two of this message states “decreasing budgets, scarce resources and seemingly constant growth in mission

and staffing has put a significant strain on many posts. A frequent refrain is that the number of temporary duty personnel has increased substantially and is eroding the ICASS platform because most temporary duty visitors do not pay into ICASS.” The cable established thresholds of \$500 for 7-day temporary duty visits and encouraged establishment of post temporary duty policies.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SECURITY

Embassy Kingston operates a comprehensive and successful information management program. Embassy users gave the section very high marks on the ICASS survey for computer services, a rating that well surpasses both WHA and worldwide scores. Notwithstanding an otherwise busy portfolio, the information management section has addressed some of the issues left unresolved after the move to the new embassy building 2 years ago. However, certain areas require management’s attention, including information systems security, classified operations, staffing, and facility security. The OIG team counseled information management on issues such as documentation, access control, and information management best practices. Overall, information management resources are still stretched because of staffing gaps caused by curtailments noted in OIG’s 2001 inspection. This has been compounded by a workload that increased as Embassy Kingston grew in size. Since OIG’s previous inspection, the number of workstations and servers supported has grown, while information management staffing has remained constant.

The information management unit is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and security of the Department’s sensitive but unclassified local area network (OpenNet), classified local area network, dedicated Internet networks, Blackberry program, telephone/radio operations, unclassified and classified pouch, as well as mailroom operations. The information management section also provides intermittent support to consular agencies in Montego Bay and the Cayman Islands. The OpenNet network consists of 240 workstations and 13 servers. The classified local area network has 22 workstations and four servers. Three American officers staff the unit: the supervisory information management officer, an information systems officer, and an information management specialist. Local staff includes three systems-support employees, four mail/pouch employees, and two switchboard operators.

Information Management Staffing

Embassy Kingston has had a local employee vacancy in its information management staffing for several years. This circumstance has prompted the information management officer to work with embassy management to convert the vacant telephone technician position to a systems administrator position. This measure would both address the Embassy's need for a webmaster and increase support for various systems administration duties. Information management initially began correspondence in 2007 with the human resources section regarding this issue and thereafter forwarded the necessary documentation to reclassify the position. The requests, however, appear to have stalled in the management section. After nearly 2 years, the issue is not resolved. The OIG team agrees with the need for the additional position in the information systems center and supports the conversion of the telephone technician job description.

Recommendation 46: Embassy Kingston should complete the conversion of the vacant telephone technician position into a locally employed systems administrator position. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

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Diplomatic Post Office

Embassy Kingston has never had an armed forces post office or other entity capable of sending outgoing mail. At present, the Embassy is concluding an agreement with the Jamaican postal authorities to establish a diplomatic post office. This effort, however, has been slowed by an internal control issue in the Jamaican postal system. The creation of the diplomatic post office will give the Embassy the ability to send outgoing mail, an issue of contention for some time. Resolution of this sore point would improve American officer and staff morale.

Staffing Constraints

The information management unit has experienced significant staffing gaps over the past several years because of curtailments and early departures. The past 3 years have witnessed three different information systems officers. Although now fully staffed, the unit faces yet another shortage once the current information systems officer departs this summer. To its credit, embassy management has actively sought to ensure a minimal gap. Because of the Department’s worldwide difficulty in filling information management specialist positions, the Kingston position would likely remain vacant if it were not able to gain a candidate via a “now” vacancy advertisement. The OIG team fully supports management’s efforts to resolve this issue.

Information Systems Center

An excursionist information systems officer effectively manages the information systems center. The current helpdesk operations are handled by a highly technical information systems center staff. Despite constant turnover in the information systems officer position, the staff has effectively maintained unclassified operations.

Users make helpdesk requests via a Web-based application called the Service Request System. In creating requests, users are able to provide details of the issue as well as to signal the degree of urgency. These requests are then received by information systems center managers who assign tasks to the staff for processing. Concurrently, they are tracked by information management staff using the online interface. The helpdesk application also enables users to rate the level of service received, an evaluation useful to information managers as they gauge the quality of service they provide. All completed requests are archived in the helpdesk application and can be viewed to determine the number of requests including details for every user account.

Pouch Escort Duties

Information management staff perform almost all of the classified pouch escort duties, a responsibility that takes about 8 hours per month and reduces the ability of information managers to provide essential basic services to mission members. Referencing 12 FAM 151.1, which states that the classified pouch escort duty is the responsibility of all agencies using the classified pouch, the information management officer has discussed with the management counselor the need for all agencies using the pouch to share the burden. The OIG team concurs with the need to allocate pouch escort duties more equitably. An informal recommendation addresses this issue.

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QUALITY OF LIFE

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

The community liaison office is well regarded by members of Embassy Kingston. While the two part-time coordinators and the newsletter editor are new to the job and not yet trained, all three are engaged with the community and energetic. They benefit from the legacy of the previous coordinator, drawing upon materials and plans she left behind and staying in contact with her for advice. Their combined experiences in social work and educational counseling will serve the mission well.

KINGSTON EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

The Kingston employee association was reestablished after being inactive for several years. The charter and bylaws were signed in October 2008, with assistance from the Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs. The association has few responsibilities so far. Members as yet do not pay dues, and there is no commissary. The association sells a few gift items in the community liaison office and is negotiating a contract to open a concessions stand in the consular waiting area. They are well positioned for growth over the next year.

HEALTH UNIT

The effectiveness of the health unit is limited only by the part-time schedule of the registered nurse. The new chancery contains generous office space for the health unit, which has state-of-the-art equipment. The part-time registered nurse is an American who has worked for Embassy Kingston for 19 years and is highly familiar with both the Embassy and local communities. She administers vaccinations and basic care, manages medical evacuations, and maintains emergency supplies for the Embassy. A regional medical officer visits quarterly to conduct exams and provide the few other services that a registered nurse cannot.

The most frequent complaint by staff during the inspection about the health unit was that it is not open enough. A desk audit conducted by the nurse in 2008 suggested that there is ample reason to increase the nurse's part-time schedule beyond 20 hours a week. The desk audit did not include consideration of the embassy staff's demand for increased availability of the nurse. Increasing or varying the hours so as to be open at least once a week in the afternoon may also be helpful.

Recommendation 52: Embassy Kingston should conduct a formal work study of the health services unit and adjust the hours accordingly. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The OIG review of the Annual Chief of Mission Management Control Statement of Assurance for 2008 finds several misleading or inaccurate statements. The document failed to note shortages of nonexpendable property in excess of \$50,000. This represents more than one percent of the total value of nonexpendable property identified in the 2008 physical inventory and thus must be reported, investigated, and resolved by a property survey board. At the time of this inspection the Embassy was attempting to reconcile shortages of nonexpendable property valued at about \$500,000, or over 10 percent of the total value of nonexpendable property identified during the annual physical inventory conducted in March of 2009. In addition, the OIG team found serious weaknesses in the procurement and leasing functions. These resulted in unauthorized commitments that have not been ratified and constitute possible violations of the Antideficiency Act (Section 3679, 31 U.S.C. 1341, 1342, 1517). In addition, the selection and initiation of a memorandum of understanding with a bank to collect machine-readable visa fees off site was questionable. A separate agreement with the same bank to provide accommodation exchange services in the Embassy was woefully incomplete.

Inventory Management

Embassy Kingston failed to investigate and correct its inadequate controls over nonexpendable property, deficiencies which were made known as a result of a physical inventory conducted in 2008. The property management officer did not report the shortages to a property survey board and did not forward a copy of Property Disposal Authorization and Survey Report (Form DS-132), including a list of the missing items, to the Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations as required by 14 FAM 416.5-1 (B) b. The Embassy did not create a property survey board for the mission until March, 2009. This board acts on reported instances of missing, damaged, or destroyed U.S. Government-owned expendable and nonexpendable personal property referred by the property management officer. As such, it has the authority to hold an employee financially liable and to determine the extent of liability for property that is missing, damaged, or destroyed as a result of negligence, improper use, or willful action on the employee's part, and to establish the amount of liability (14 FAM 416.5-2 a.).

Prior to initiating the current physical inventory, the Embassy converted from the nonexpendable property accountability system to the integrated logistics management system. Personnel attributed some of the significant shortages to the accuracy of the data transfer made in the conversion. At the time of the OIG inspection, they were continuing to research each entry.

Recommendation 53: Embassy Kingston should complete the reconciliation process for the physical inventory made in March 2009 and report shortages to the embassy property survey board and the Office of Inspector General. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Unauthorized Commitments and Possible Violations of the Antideficiency Act

Procedures in place for the negotiation and award of leases for residential property and procurement actions were weak. (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)

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The Embassy, although aware that these unauthorized commitments required ratification (14 FAM 215 e.), did not initiate action to have the transactions ratified. Neither has any attempt been made to report the possible violations of Section 3679 of the revised statutes, as amended, required by 4 FAM 088.1-1 a. and b. The first paragraph states that “any person with knowledge of a possible violation of section 3679 of the revised statutes, as amended, must report it immediately to the allottee

or the designee and to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Global Financial Services or designee.” And the second paragraph states that “the allottee must prepare a report containing the information required by 4 FAM 088.1-5 (report to the president) and transmit it immediately to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Global Financial Services or designee. Subsequent actions taken to correct the cause of a violation do not eliminate that violation. It is still required to be reported.”

Recommendation 54: Embassy Kingston should review all leases and procurement actions valued at \$1,000 or more since the arrival of the incumbent supervisory general services officer, identify unauthorized commitments, and submit the transactions with all required documentation to the Department for ratification. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 55: Embassy Kingston should review all leases and procurement actions since the arrival of the incumbent supervisory general services officer, identify possible violations of Section 3679 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, and initiate required reporting. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Off-Site Collection of Visa Fees

In November 2008, the Embassy executed a new 1-year memorandum of understanding for the off-site collection of machine-readable visa fees. In corresponding with potential bidders, the Embassy indicated that it processed about 90,000 applications each year and the winning bidder would be that offering the lowest fee per transaction. The OIG team found that the chosen bank was being compensated at the rate of \$1.50 per transaction but could ascertain no clear reason or documentation for this amount, which was higher than another bidder and higher than the winning bank’s proposed figure.

Documentation provided to the OIG team showed that the winning bank on April 17, 2008, months before the selection was made, stated that it would charge a collection fee of \$1.30. If this rate had not been subsequently adjusted upwards to \$1.50, the Embassy would have an additional income of \$18,000 a year. There was also the potential for even greater savings if the actual low bidder, who had been the Embassy’s collection agent for the preceding years, had been selected.

Embassy Kingston decided to eliminate a category of service (appointment (re)scheduling) that was included in the initial solicitation. However, that decision appears not to have been conveyed to the respective bidders. Eliminating this cost reduced the former collection agent's bid to \$1.15. Had this collection agent been selected the potential savings would be about \$31,500 a year. The Department is in the process of replacing all user-pay concession agreements with a global support services support contract, which will replace all posts' memoranda of agreement.

Recommendation 56: Embassy Kingston should open negotiations to obtain a downward adjustment of the rate being charged for the collection of visa fees by the current depository. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

On-Site Banking Services

The Embassy initiated a contract in September 2007 with a commercial bank to provide cashiering services at the Embassy for 2 hours twice weekly for all members of the embassy community in return for a \$28,000 fee paid by the mission. The days and times of operation were changed in January 2009, but the contract has not been modified. Although not specified, the cashier, as part of the service, is to provide accommodation exchange for official Americans. The Embassy's Class B cashier does not, as a matter of routine, perform accommodation exchange services.

The contract has some serious omissions. As mentioned, it does not specify performance of accommodation exchange. Further, it fails to specify rates of exchange to be used, fees or taxes to be charged when providing accommodation exchange, or check amounts that can be exchanged. In addition, the rates of exchange used by the bank were as much as ten percent lower than the Embassy's official rate.

Recommendation 57: Embassy Kingston should review the terms of the current contract for on-site cashiering services and as appropriate renegotiate its terms to include required provisions and specify details of operations. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation 1:** Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Department's Office of the Global Aids Coordinator, should determine the relative amounts of the new regional partnership framework HIV/AIDS funds to be allotted to Jamaica and others in the 12-nation compact based in large part on population and prevalence data. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with S/GAC)
- Recommendation 2:** Embassy Kingston should develop and execute a public diplomacy strategy. (Action: Embassy Kingston)
- Recommendation 3:** Embassy Kingston should establish a committee to coordinate the nomination of Jamaican candidates for the International Visitors program. (Action: Embassy Kingston)
- Recommendation 4:** Embassy Kingston should send the appropriate information resource center employees for training in professional development. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with IIP)
- Recommendation 5:** Embassy Kingston should conduct security checks on specific visitors to the information resource center and issue escort-required badges to visitors selected by the public affairs section. (Action: Embassy Kingston)
- Recommendation 6:** Embassy Kingston should conduct monthly student advising sessions at the information resource center, marketing them to selected schools and universities. (Action: Embassy Kingston)
- Recommendation 7:** Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Bureau of International Information Programs, should provide appropriate technical training to the local employee who manages the embassy Web site. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with IIP)
- Recommendation 8:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Kingston, should design and fund a solution to the problem of crowding at Embassy Kingston's compound access control number two. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 18: Embassy Kingston should annotate the files of those responsible for consular section 2008 evaluation report delinquencies. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 19: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Florida Regional Center, should reorganize its consular fraud prevention unit to appoint the senior-most local staff member as the local supervisor. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with FRC)

Recommendation 20: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Florida Regional Center, should complete reevaluation of all the local fraud prevention positions using the computer-assisted job evaluation process. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with FRC)

Recommendation 21: Embassy Kingston should implement procedures to submit all immigrant and nonimmigrant visa petitions that appear to be revocable to the consular fraud prevention unit for investigation, analysis, and revocation request drafting, submission, and tracking. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 22: Embassy Kingston should implement procedures to submit all citizenship and passport applications that appear fraudulent to the consular fraud prevention unit for investigation, analysis, and recommendation for action by an American citizen services unit officer. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 23: Embassy Kingston should assign responsibility for performing and reporting validation studies to the fraud prevention unit and transfer all completed and in-process validation studies to the fraud prevention unit. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 24: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should increase Embassy Kingston's routine maintenance budget to cover the cost of installing emergency lighting in the new embassy compound. (Action: OBO)

Recommendation 25: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should complete plans and an agreement with the Department of Homeland Security to build secure office space in the new office annex. (Action: Embassy Kingston, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 26: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Embassy Kingston, should expand the parking area in the new embassy compound. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 48: (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
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Recommendation 51: The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs should conduct a site audit of Embassy Kingston's computer infrastructure. (Action: WHA)

Recommendation 52: Embassy Kingston should conduct a formal work study of the health services unit and adjust the hours accordingly. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 53: Embassy Kingston should complete the reconciliation process for the physical inventory made in March 2009 and report shortages to the embassy property survey board and the Office of Inspector General. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 54: Embassy Kingston should review all leases and procurement actions valued at \$1,000 or more since the arrival of the incumbent supervisory general services officer, identify unauthorized commitments, and submit the transactions with all required documentation to the Department for ratification. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 55: Embassy Kingston should review all leases and procurement actions since the arrival of the incumbent supervisory general services officer, identify possible violations of Section 3679 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, and initiate required reporting. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 56: Embassy Kingston should open negotiations to obtain a downward adjustment of the rate being charged for the collection of visa fees by the current depository. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

Recommendation 57: Embassy Kingston should review the terms of the current contract for on-site cashiering services and as appropriate renegotiate its terms to include required provisions and specify details of operations. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal recommendations cover operational matters not requiring action by organizations outside the inspected unit and/or the parent regional bureau. Informal recommendations will not be subject to the OIG compliance process. However, any subsequent OIG inspection or on-site compliance review will assess the mission's progress in implementing the informal recommendations.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SECTION

The Embassy has not achieved the widest possible distribution in Washington of noncable communications to help analytical officials in all agencies.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Kingston should work with the Department's country directorate for Caribbean affairs to ensure the widest possible distribution to all interested agencies of embassy e-mails and other noncable communications.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

The OIG team found that the public affairs section was not working closely with USAID in dealing with the Jamaican media. Incorporating the promotion of USAID programs and activities into the mission activity tracker, as well as coordinating the preparation and placement of press materials, would result in economies of staff time and improve Embassy Kingston's public posture.

Informal recommendation 2: Embassy Kingston should require the public affairs section to coordinate media operations with the United States Agency for International Development. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

CONSULAR SECTION

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Informal Recommendation 3: (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
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The consul general has delegated to the visa chief numerous administrative issues that do not solely concern the visa unit, leaving the visa chief little time to devote to his own responsibilities. This work could best be handled by the consul general himself, whose rank and experience could affect faster and more positive outcomes.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Kingston should require the consul general to take responsibility for administrative matters that concern the entire section.

PROCUREMENT

Paper files for open purchase orders are incomplete. This appears to be due to the reliance on the Ariba electronic system, which procurement clerks are still adjusting to.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Kingston should implement procedures to maintain complete hardcopy procurement files.

Incomplete or inappropriate purchase requests are frequently submitted by embassy offices and given initial approval by the supervisory general services officer in the electronic system, then passed down to procurement agents and clerks for resolution.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Kingston should implement procedures to improve the review of purchase requests before they are granted initial approval.

MOTOR POOL MANAGEMENT

Individual vehicle records were incomplete. The OIG review found that fuel and oil logs, accident reports, and maintenance records were frequently missing.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Kingston should implement procedures to maintain complete motor pool records.

Drivers frequently failed to complete the daily and weekly vehicle safety checklists.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy Kingston should implement procedures to ensure drivers regularly perform vehicle safety checks.

REAL PROPERTY

The general services office and the interagency housing board are searching for homes that are on the near side of the 8-foot gully to eliminate extremely long commutes during the rainy season, but the area is more expensive for leasing and most homes surpass the current rental benchmark initiative targets for Embassy Kingston.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Kingston should request an increase in the rental benchmark initiative targets.

POUCH ESCORT DUTIES

Information management staff perform all classified pouch escort duties, a duty that takes about 8 hours per month. According to 12 FAM 151.1, the classified pouch escort duty is the responsibility of all agencies using the classified pouch.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy Kingston should require that all agencies using pouch services share pouch escort responsibilities. (Action: Embassy Kingston)

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Arrival Date
Chargé d'affaires	James Heg	08/06
Chiefs of Sections:		
Management	Eric Flohr	08/06
Consular	Edward Wehrli	08/06
Political and Economic	Lloyd Moss	08/06
Narcotics Affairs	Andrea Lewis	08/06
Public Affairs	Patricia Attkisson	06/07
Regional Affairs	Rich DeRienzo	12/08
Regional Security	Arthur Balek	10/06
Other Agencies:		
Department of Agriculture		
-Animal Plant and Health Service	Vacant	
Department of Defense		
-Military Liaison Office	Erik Valentzas	07/07
-Defense Attaché Office	Domenick Micillo	12/08
-Tactical Analysis Team	Brent Jones, Acting	12/07
Department of Homeland Security		
-U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement	Vance Callender	02/07
-U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services	Adijatu Aboise	09/08
-U.S. Customs and Border Protection	TDY	
Department of Justice		
-Drug Enforcement Administration	Gavin Kersellius	04/08
-U.S. Marshals Service	Charles Ahmad	01/08
Peace Corps	Liela Webster	03/09
U.S. Agency for International Development	Karen Hilliard	10/07

ABBREVIATIONS

DCM	deputy chief of mission
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
OIG	Office of Inspector General
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WHA	Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

FRAUD, WASTE, ABUSE, OR MISMANAGEMENT
of Federal programs
and resources hurts everyone.

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